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FEB 18 '54 (?)

ATTN: []

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- OBOPUS/CHHUNT
- Guidance for 1954 Operational Season

1. The following material has been prepared in answer to the field's past requests for headquarters' views on 1954 cross-border operations into Albania. As background, the field should know that the high headquarters staffs have been conducting a review of all denied area activity and that some of what follows results from conclusions common to KUBARK operations in all such areas. In addition, recent events involving Albanian operations have stimulated a review of OBOPUS in the hope of determining the reasons for the high proportion of failures and the relative unproductiveness of the successful operations.

2. The general objectives for Albanian operations remain approximately the same as in the last few operational seasons. They are:

- a. To obtain positive and operational intelligence on political, economic and military developments in Albania. I.D's and I.O's previously forwarded to the field are still in effect.
- b. To maintain and strengthen the hope of eventual liberation of the Albanian people and to bolster their will to resist Communism.
- c. To develop basic assets and prepare the terrain for the eventual separation of Albania from the Soviet bloc.
- d. To establish E and E nets, guerrilla warfare nuclei and to prepare to fulfill other SHAPE U/W requirements.

3. Although these general and long-term goals remain the same, recent experience suggests certain changes in means and the further reduction of the distinctions hitherto maintained among KUPINE, KUGOWN and KUHOOK operations. The primary objective of all Albanian operations in the coming season should be the secure creation of permanent, dependable KUBARK assets inside the country which can be exploited for intelligence and for political or resistance action where and when

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deemed appropriate. Last this should sound merely like the reiteration of the obvious, we hasten to elaborate. This change in emphasis means that the main effort should no longer be directed at the mounting of groups whose purpose is a) to enter an area and organize "resistance nets," and b) to remain in the area as long as possible while maintaining W/T contact with the base and being resupplied from the air. The three and a half operational seasons which have been devoted largely to this type of activity have produced few permanent assets and have brought heavy losses in men and equipment. The shift in emphasis which we hope to see carried out will involve the following changes in the type of mission:

- a. Groups should be kept as small as practical.
- b. The time spent on hostile territory should be reduced to the minimum required to make the planned contacts.
- c. The goal of the mission should generally be shifted from the "organization of resistance nets" to the contacting of specific individuals who have prospects for the development of positive intelligence and/or some means of reaching political, security and police officials who in turn might be recruited. When contact has been effected an attempt should be made to recruit these individuals as resident agents with a permanent communications link. Of the various types of links, we believe dead-letter-drops are to be preferred for reasons of simplicity and security. Obviously, operations of this type depend for continuity on the mounting of numerous infiltrations of brief duration for the servicing of dead-letter-drops and the maintenance of contacts. In addition, the task of reaching dead-letter drops at longer distances from the border can prove hazardous. Thought should therefore be given to the admittedly difficult task of posting a W/T operator in the neighborhood of the contact to handle his traffic or training a resident W/T operator for the same purpose. These methods, however, would be worth attempting only if a genuinely high-level contact were recruited whose material justified the effort and risk. Another alternative would be the recruiting of one or more live letter-drops in the border regions of Southern Albania who could be serviced with relative ease. Contacts could be instructed to forward reports through the open mails to the live letter-drops, depending on the fact that internal mail is uncensored in Albania. If further protection were required for the live letter-drop, the originator of the reports could be instructed to use a low-level S.W. system. Elaboration of this type of proposal could continue indefinitely. One further point is worth mentioning. In the event that no other system appears feasible, and depending on the intelligence level of the agents, a medium-grade S.W. system could be used and letters mailed to a drop in the U.S. To get the correspondence off to a good start the first letter could be written from a "relative" in the U.S. along with a gift package.

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4. An effort should be made to keep down the total number of projects being run by the Albanian branch in Athens to a figure commensurate with the number of case officers available. Emphasis should be placed on the careful and detailed preparation of each mission in accordance with criteria which will be itemized in the following paragraph. As suggested in previous dispatches, full reporting should be maintained and all pertinent details forwarded regularly to headquarters. The total number of projects should be kept down, therefore, to a load which can be adequately prepared and fully reported.

4. The criteria mentioned above are being set up to assure all concerned that the given project has been painstakingly planned in all details, that the agents selected have been thoroughly assessed and are the best available, and that they have been trained in all the skills they will require. Headquarters, therefore, will not normally approve the dispatching of an agent or team until the following criteria have been met:

- a. A detailed assessment has been received of each agent, stating the views of those who have handled him on his level of intelligence, initiative, degree of education, capacity for improvement and further development, motivation, security-consciousness, physical condition, and plans for his training and use.
- b. A detailed plan has been drawn up and forwarded for each operation well in advance of target date. The plan should set forth all pertinent details, including the proposed dates and duration, proposed method of infiltration, specific places to be visited, specific contacts to be made (with all available biographical information on the contacts), the roles of the different members of the group, the overall objective of the mission. Under no circumstances should any mission be mounted until headquarters has approved the plans and notified the field that traces have been run on the proposed contacts and no derogatory information has been disclosed.
- c. A training report should also be submitted on each agent, indicating the type of training received, number of hours spent on different subjects, and the agent's response to his training. We note that in the past training has emphasized physical conditioning, weapons, map reading, etc., with apparently little emphasis placed on security protection once inside the country (making of secure contacts, selection of safehouses, methods of covering up the trail, etc.). We tend to feel that a re-examination of training and a placing of emphasis on such subjects would improve the performance of the teams. We note with a great deal of satisfaction that training of this kind is now being given to the W/T group (SOAA-7954). Since training often continues up to the eve of a mission, we will not necessarily expect to receive the training report before giving final approval to the mission. It should, however, be forwarded as soon as practicable.

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- d. Once an agent has been recruited, the officer handling should submit regular reports giving all pertinent details of his development or deterioration (as the case may be), including morale, security or insecurity, continued motivation or lack of it--in other words a continuing evaluation of the individuals involved. These reports can be merged with the monthly OBHUNT report requested in SGAW-3370, or handled separately as proposed in SGAA-7956. The reports received for the 15 December-15 January are an excellent beginning but we would still like to see even more detail on the various agents.

5. Methods of Infiltration and Support

From paragraph 3 it should be apparent that headquarters' views on air operations have changed somewhat as a result of recent experience. While there is no outright ban on the air-drop of supplies or agents to reception parties, we feel that this method should be restricted to operations of high priority where without it the project could not be mounted. We continue (as we believe the field does too) to feel that blind drops are too uncertain to be undertaken except in extremely urgent cases, if ever. However, if the emphasis is placed on operations of short duration, as proposed above, our teams would naturally be less dependent on air re-supply. If, nevertheless, air operations to fixed points in Albanian territory are proposed, they will be subject to the same rules recently laid down for similar operations by other branches of the division, i.e., headquarters will not approve such a mission unless it is in possession of an up-to-date security log of the entire operation, making possible a considered appraisal of the security factors, based on all available evidence.

6. Suggestions for Specific Operations

What follows is put forward in full realization of the fact that the field has more information than headquarters on the potentialities of available agents and that various possibilities are known to you which have not yet been reported. We make the following proposals, therefore, as suggestions of the type of projects we have in mind and as illustrations of our thinking rather than as firm recommendations.

- a. A means of communication other than W/T is of first importance if we center our objectives on the recruitment of permanent resident agents. W/T, while it has many advantages, also requires the mounting and maintenance of teams to support it and is therefore subject to all the risks and uncertainty which beset team activities. We therefore consider a matter of considerable urgency the problem of recruiting one or more live drops in the border area to receive material via postal, courier or other channels and place it in a dead drop which in turn would be serviced regularly from Greece. We recognize that the frequent servicing of a dead drop presents problems since it is difficult to persuade a team to make more than three infiltrations in a single season, even though such infiltrations are of short duration, while to be really useful the proposed live letter/dead letter drop should be serviced more frequently. We therefore suggest

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that (as a final resort only) the servicing of the dead letter-drop (as distinguished from the actual contacting of the agent) be performed by several different groups in rotation, without regard to whether such groups have contacts in the area. The practicality of such a proposal naturally depends on such factors as the distance of the drop from the border, the availability of guides, etc., but might be considered a useful way of occupying some of the agents who have been held for years without being used.

- b. We assume that Fig and Willow will be used again in some way. However, we feel that the planning of this season's operations must take into account the compromise of many of the team's contacts owing to the betrayal of Fig by Adem Zenelli. The debriefing of Fig (SGAA-7125) indicates that Willow was also involved as a result of the contact between Zenelli and Airlack's wife. We are compelled to assume that everything known about the teams by Zenelli is known to the opposition. Since this at a minimum includes the identities of Airwise, Airbred and Airbrake of Fig and Airlack of Willow, it must further be assumed that the relatives and known friends of these four have been spotted and will be watched throughout the season. If Fig and Willow are sent back without regard to these facts there is a serious risk that the teams will be lost; the best that we can expect is that they will spend much of their time in flight and will produce little of value. We therefore recommend that any mission given to either team involve only those contacts about whose compromise via Zenelli there can be no doubt whatever. It might also be helpful to LCELUTTER the team members before remounting either team.
- c. As to the actual objective for Fig and Willow, the field will have its own ideas. We suggest, however, that an effort be made to gain more permanent benefits from Fig's remaining contacts. We therefore propose for your consideration the possibility of giving third party W/T training to the best contact and attempting to set up a permanent link. Alternative links for your consideration would be the live-letter drop mentioned above or a statewide letter-drop (using medium-grade S.W.). A further objective, we feel, should be to revive if practicable, one of the original purposes of the mission, which was to make contact with identity (1). As you will recall, identity (1) was alleged to be the chief figure in a resistance network in Korce.
- d. [] states that in the course of Fig's first infiltration in 1952, RNDOLLAR proposed traveling to Tirana to contact a brother but was prevented from doing so by Airwise. We do not know how seriously RNDOLLAR intended this proposal nor how he expected to travel. However, we feel it should be discussed with him. He has impressed those who know him as a shrewd individual, capable of carrying out more daring missions than the others. It might be possible, therefore, to persuade him to attempt to reach Tirana by bus, as one of Fig's

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contacts proposed doing this year (SGAA-7125, para 3 (1)). In this connection, RNDOLLAR has been known to say that "he would go anywhere" with Airspray. We are aware that the latter has fallen afoul of Gangplank's office and has been placed on an island to humble him. Perhaps Gangplank would now be willing to release him to KUBARK. From all accounts, he is the only Albanian in Greece who can compare with RNFUTLOG in operational experience and daring. If (either on foot with Airspray or someone else, or alone and by bus), RNDOLLAR could be persuaded to attempt to contact his brother in Tirana, we would propose as a mission the recruiting of the brother as a resident agent, live drop or safe-house. We would further propose providing the brother with the address of a live drop in the border area and instructing him to forward letters regularly to that address, whether or not he has anything to report. Once such a link is established it may be possible to exploit contacts in Tirana available to other sources (e.g. Hamid Mitrovica of SGAA-7656 or Roland Mojsi Papa of STTA-3561 or Aiquad) who could communicate with RNDOLLAR's brother via a dead drop which he would be instructed to establish and service. Admittedly the foregoing is a compendium of "iffy" propositions. We suggest them as an indication of the way in which we feel the problem of establishing usable assets in Albania should be approached, rather than as firm recommendations.

- e. In the event that RNDOLLAR is unwilling to accept the Tirana assignment or it is not feasible for other reasons, we propose that he be considered for an operation in the Konispol area, which is his home and where, presumably, he has some useful contacts.
- f. As we have stated before, we consider the contacting of Ailion a priority objective for 1954. The very excellent analysis of the possibilities contained in SGAA-7902 has just been received in headquarters and is being studied. Our comments will be forwarded shortly.
- g. The foregoing exhausts the specific operational suggestions which headquarters feels able to contribute at this time to your planning for 1954. We have some additional questions, however, which we hope you will be able to answer. First, we are interested in your thinking regarding any additional ENCASTING teams. Second, we wish to know if any consideration has been given to exploiting Janni Hitto's contacts in the Albanian Army (i.e., mounting a project to approach any individuals he might recommend); finally, we would be interested in learning of any use which you plan to make of Airlock and Airblown, both of whom appear to be several cuts above the usual agent.

7. Recruiting

The spotting and recruiting of new agent material represents a continuing field responsibility which should always be (and we are certain, is) kept in the forefront of the field's objectives. Headquarters tends to feel that we

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will have to cast our nets wider than hitherto. A continuing problem is that of the intermediary. Obviously, KUBARK officers cannot wander about interviewing potential prospects themselves. Equally obviously, it is undesirable to become closely involved with a political group because of such factors as control and security. If possible, we should attempt to build up a string of indigenous spotters in all likely places and have recourse to them. We should be satisfied that these spotters are secure and have no loyalties to Albanian groups which outweigh their loyalty to KUBARK. There follows a review of the possibilities as they appear to headquarters.

- a. Greece. Presumably we are adequately covered in Greece as regards new arrivals from Albania. Lavrion appears to be worked out, except for support types. However, we would like to ask if the field considers that our present set-up gives us a complete picture of the Lavrion situation, or whether it might not be worthwhile to improve our spotting facilities there and separate them from the HTNEIGH set-up.
- b. Trieste. We feel that Trieste has been somewhat neglected as a source of agent material and that it might be worthwhile for a member of the [] staff to make a trip there in the near future to go over the lists of Albanian refugees with Aicomb. Such a trip might also be worthwhile to examine the possibilities of maintaining coverage of the Albanian refugees in Trieste after Aicomb departs. (It would also give [] a chance to assess Aicomb himself and decide whether he might not be useful [] in event our plan to use him [] proves unworkable.)
- c. Italy. Unfortunately, most of the Albanians with whom we deal through HTNEIGH are bound to their parties and could be expected to share their knowledge of our operations with their parties. This is true in less degree, however, of Towell and Pashley, both of whom (especially the latter) have demonstrated loyalty to KUBARK. We therefore suggest that the field consider approaching these two individuals with a request that they name men over whom they might have influence and who might prove effective agent material. [] might also consider discussing with [] whether BOPREFIX still could provide anyone worth investigation.
- d. Istanbul. This is relatively virgin territory for OBOPUS and here, too, the field might consider a trip to discuss the prospects with [] However, we should state at this point that we are leary of Extangle as a spotting and recruiting agent because of his close ties with RINCASTING, Extremity and Excellence. Almost, certainly, anything known to him of KUBARK operations would shortly become known to RINCASTING and to Excellence.
- e. RINCASTING. This remains the \$64.00 question. Whether RINCASTING can continue to be of assistance to us depends in part on his reaction to the Apple debacle and in part on his success in extricating himself from the toils of the Egyptian dictatorship. We had perhaps best leave this matter in abeyance until the dust has settled. Headquarters

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continues, however, to make every effort possible to assist ENCASTING in getting to the U.S. Our motives are based as much on gratitude for past services as they are on hopes for future collaboration.

- f. Munich. JEPARSON has for good reason not been considered a source of agent material for some time. There remain, however, a few individuals who may have something to offer. It might repay the field to study the roster again and possibly send someone to Munich to get [] views. If one or two individuals are considered worthy of development, it should not be impossible to remove them securely and unhurriedly. (A plan might be worked out whereby they notify their comrades well in advance that they have applied for emigration or found a job in Rome.)

It is worth emphasizing at this point that we should not be content with the recommendation of the spotter alone, but should make certain that each potential agent is thoroughly scrutinized and assessed by an OBOPUS case officer before he is recruited.

8. We appreciate that the changes proposed in this dispatch are radical in some cases and that other suggestions raise as many questions as they answer. For this reason a visit by [] to the field is being planned for early in March. He will spend sufficient time in Athens to go over the above points as thoroughly as necessary and to take up any other questions the field may have. We naturally await with interest the field's views on the points raised in this dispatch.

[Chief, SE]

SE-1/ [] 671/ym/17 Feb.

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Attachment to SGAW-4063,
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(under separate cover)

Identity 1 - Shafget Gega

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